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Letter dated 26 June 2012 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to respond to the letter of the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations dated 24 June 2012 (A/66/857-S/2012/480) and to provide detailed information regarding the incident that caused a Turkish warplane to crash on 22 June 2012.

Official Syrian channels state that on 22 June 2012, Syrian radar systems identified a flying object proceeding towards Syrian territory. The object turned left towards the north-east, descending to a low altitude before disappearing from the radar. It then abruptly reappeared at a height of 100 metres and a distance of 1 to 2 kilometres from the Syrian coastline, where it was suddenly sighted by the naked eye at 1140 hours. The object was identified as an aircraft heading directly towards the Syrian coastline at a speed of 700 to 800 kilometres per hour, thereby automatically prompting a response from the Syrian coastal air defence system consisting of 23 to 57 millimetre anti-aircraft guns, which hit the aircraft at once. It was seen turning to the left, and then crashed into Syrian territorial waters.

It is clear that those facts, which we have established, correspond without a doubt to the incident as it occurred, in contrast with the letter sent by the Permanent Representative of Turkey, and that the incident resulted from the Turkish warplane violating Syrian airspace and thus attacking Syrian sovereignty. Under international law, such action authorizes the State to respond through military means.

As a sign of goodwill, the air force, navy and security branches of Syrian Arab Army Command entered into close communication with their Turkish counterparts after the incident in order to clarify the matter. They provided every possible assistance to the search and rescue operation. The Syrian authorities also immediately proposed forming a joint technical committee of the Syrian and Turkish air forces, which would meet on the site of the incident to examine it in all its aspects. The Syrian authorities have yet to receive a response to that proposal.

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The Syrian Arab Republic is eager to see the return of the good neighbourly relations that existed between the two countries, and looks forward to addressing the incident in a wise and objective manner.

I should be grateful if this letter could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Bashar **Ja'afari**
Permanent Representative of the
Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations